DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 289 059 CE 049 286

AUTHOR Silverman, Eda; Hanna, Joyce

TITLE Test Anxiety Reduction. Student Handbook.
INSTITUTION CORA-Neumann Program, Philadelphia, PA.
SPONS AGENCY Pennsylvania State Dept. of Education, Harrisburg. Div. of Advisory Services.
PUB DATE May 87
CONTRACT 98-7018
NOTE 17p.; For related documents, see CE 049 285-287.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Behavior Modification; *Change Strategies; Coping; High School Equivalency Programs; Relaxation Training; *Stress Management; Student Developed Materials; *Test Anxiety; *Test Wiseness
IDENTIFIERS 310 Project; *General Educational Development Tests

ABSTRACT

This handbook is intended to illustrate to students that they are not alone in their fear of tests and to help students reduce their own test anxiety. The handbook is a compilation of writings contributed by students who attended an adult basic education (ABE) program to prepare teenage and adult students to take the General Educational Development (GED) test. The poems, articles, and crossword puzzle included in the handbook reveal their authors' personal feelings about tests and explain how learning about methods to reduce test anxiety helped them to perform better in testing situations. (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

TEST ANXIETY

ED289059
RECEIVED
JUL 31 1987
ADULT EDUCATION

CORA-
NEUMANN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J Christopher

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE049286

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TEST ANXIETY REDUCTION

Student Handbook

developed by

Eda Silverman, M.S., Program Assistant in Education
and Joyce Hanna, M.S.S., GED Teacher, from a
proposal written by Deborah Williams, M.Ed., Program Director,
under the supervision of Dr. Anthony Chunn, Executive.
The aforementioned are on the staff at
CORA-Neumann Program
Adams Avenue and Orthodox Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19124

This handbook is a compilation of writings
contributed by students who attended
CORA-Neumann
in the Spring of 1987

This project was completed in May, 1987

We would like to acknowledge the Pennsylvania Department of Education for providing $4,950 to fund this 310 project.

Pennsylvania Department of Education
Division of Advisory Services
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

Project Number: 98-7018

These materials have been submitted to Dr. John Christopher, Chief of the Division of Adult Basic Education at the Pennsylvania Department of Education. He will submit copies to AdvancE and that agency will be responsible for further dissemination.

AdvancE
The Adult Education Clearinghouse
PDE Resource Center
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

Other copies have been sent to:

1. Gloria Ortiz
   Lutheran Settlement House
   1304 Frankford Avenue
   Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19125

2. Wayne Perry
   Project Director
   Focus
   700 Yarmall Street
   Chester, Pennsylvania 19013

3. Lucille Ott Howard
   Program Analyst
   Youth Services Coordinating Office
   City of Philadelphia
   Office of the Managing Director
   1401 Arch Street - 10th Floor
   Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102

This handbook is a result of a project supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Office of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education or the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to illustrate to students that they are not alone in their fear of tests. Most people have varying degrees of test anxiety, which is not necessarily bad. When the anxiety is severe, however, it will interfere with a student's ability to perform well and, consequently, cause the failure that they fear. These extremely anxious students will not be able to achieve their academic or career goals and will be hampered by a low self-esteem. It is hoped that by reading about other students' experiences with tests and their learning to control their test anxiety, new students will identify with these experiences. When students no longer feel alone in their fear of tests, they will gain hope that they, too, will learn how to cope with their test anxiety -- the dreaded threat to their success.

Note to Students

Many times people feel they are all alone in whatever is happening to them. "No one knows what I'm going through," "I'm the only one who feels this way," and "Something must be wrong with me," are some thoughts running through their minds. They feel different, so they try to hide their feelings from others. However, they sometimes think about it and are frustrated when they cannot change or solve their problems.

When people allow themselves to discuss their feelings with others, they discover there are other people who feel the same things. This fact generates inner strength and creates a bond between people. Together they can help each other conquer all kinds of problems.

People display their anxiety to tests in different ways. Some tense their muscles, some breathe faster, some feel the need to smoke a cigarette. Most people have negative thoughts about themselves, such as, "I am stupid," or "I know I'm going to flunk this test, anyway." You probably experience very similar kinds of things.

The following pages contain a collection of poems and articles written by students. They reveal their feelings about tests and how learning about methods to reduce test anxiety helped them to perform better in a testing situation. As you read them you will find you are not alone and that you, too, can learn to control your test anxiety.

Student Writings

Tests I

A challenge to the mind,
The final battle in learning a concept,
Many are doomed to fail.

But you don't care,
You're too much of a dude,
Actually you have a self-confidence.

The paper is handed out,
What is all that stuff?
It means nothing to you.
Who is she who says I have to take this test?
Who is my mom to say I better pass?
It's my life - not theirs!

You feel your stomach acids
Eating away at your insides.
One hour a night of study,
And then you could have fooled around
Maybe a little extra help.
Now you're in a pit with no sign of sunshine.
Think, idiot, think.

Things learned in class come back to you,
Your eyes wander a little,
The clock, the teacher, the kid next to you, his paper,

The bell rings.
Sweat pours off you as you guess at answers,
And all day you worry.

You get your paper back,
You passed by a point.
Never go through that again,
But you know you probably will.

Ian Silverman

I used to feel very nervous about taking tests. I felt like I had knots in my stomach. I worked very fast because I was so worried about the time running out on me, and as I rushed, I was absent-minded. I just didn't know how to react on the day of the test.

In test anxiety class I learned how to react when I am taking a test. I learned how to relax and keep my mind busy and I now know what to do if I get excited on the day of the test. Before this class I would rush through the test in order to be finished. I was always worried about the time left.

When I went to take my first GED test, I was not nervous at all. I was very calm and thought about the math problems to see if my answers were correct. I'm really glad I learned how to relax.

Robert Tiest

Before I went to test anxiety class I felt kind of afraid of tests. When I took them it seemed as if the world would just stop and I was the only one moving.

After the classes I felt that no test would ever scare me again or make me sick to my stomach.

When I went down to the place where I had to take my first GED test, I felt OK until the test started. Then my mind went blank for about a minute. But I just told myself that if I didn't know it I wouldn't be there. I took a deep breath and started the test.

Dewey Wilson

The first time I went to Temple to take a test I felt nervous in the stomach area. Then I went to some test anxiety classes. I didn't think that these classes would make me feel any different and I didn't until I went to take another test.

When I went to take my second GED test, I felt a lot better. I think it was because of what I learned in test anxiety class.

Osman Shahaj

I used to always feel scared and I would blank out before I had to take a test. Then I forgot the answers and I would always fail. After I went to test anxiety classes I felt better that I knew how to relax before taking a test so I wouldn't forget the answers and I could get an "A" on the test. It helped me to calm down and breathe so I wasn't so nervous when I took my GED test and I could do my best. Then I can get out of this GED program and go on to college and get a job as a computer programmer.

Steven Roach

Until I went to test anxiety classes I was always very nervous about taking tests and I used to fail them all the time. I never liked tests, but I guess I never will because they always make me feel uncomfortable.

Then I went to test anxiety classes. I feel more comfortable about taking tests and they don't make me as nervous as they used to. Now I know how to control my nerves and that makes me feel like I can control myself whenever I have to.

When I went to take my GED test, I remembered what I learned in test anxiety class. It helped me a lot because I wasn't as nervous as I was before I took the class. I was in control of what I was doing. I didn't blank out or anything else. I kept a steady head and thought about everything I was doing.

Kim Downey

Crossword Puzzle
by Timothy Wiley

Across

3-Be sure to know the _____or subject material on the test.

5-Systematic preparation.

6-You must_____when time is up.

7-Tests can be frightening and_____.

9-Most students feel_____because they want to do well.

10-Be_____to show all your identification papers.

11-What will be your form of_____ to the testing site?

16-There is sometimes a penalty for wrong answers when the test is_____.

17-It is important to_____in order to think straight.

19-There must be enough oxygen in your brain for you to_____clearly.

20-Concentrate and block out all distracting_____.

22-Sometimes muscles tense up when you are_____.

Down

1-An emotion many students feel about having to take tests.

2-When you take a test, you should_____to stay calm.

3-Sit where you can watch the_____.

4-Many students blank out and find themselves in a situation of_____.

6-Do not_____a test until the proctor gives directions.

7-If you are prepared and relaxed, you can do well on the test and feel_____.

8-Be sure you know how the test is scored before you start _____.

12-Be aware of the_____and pace yourself.

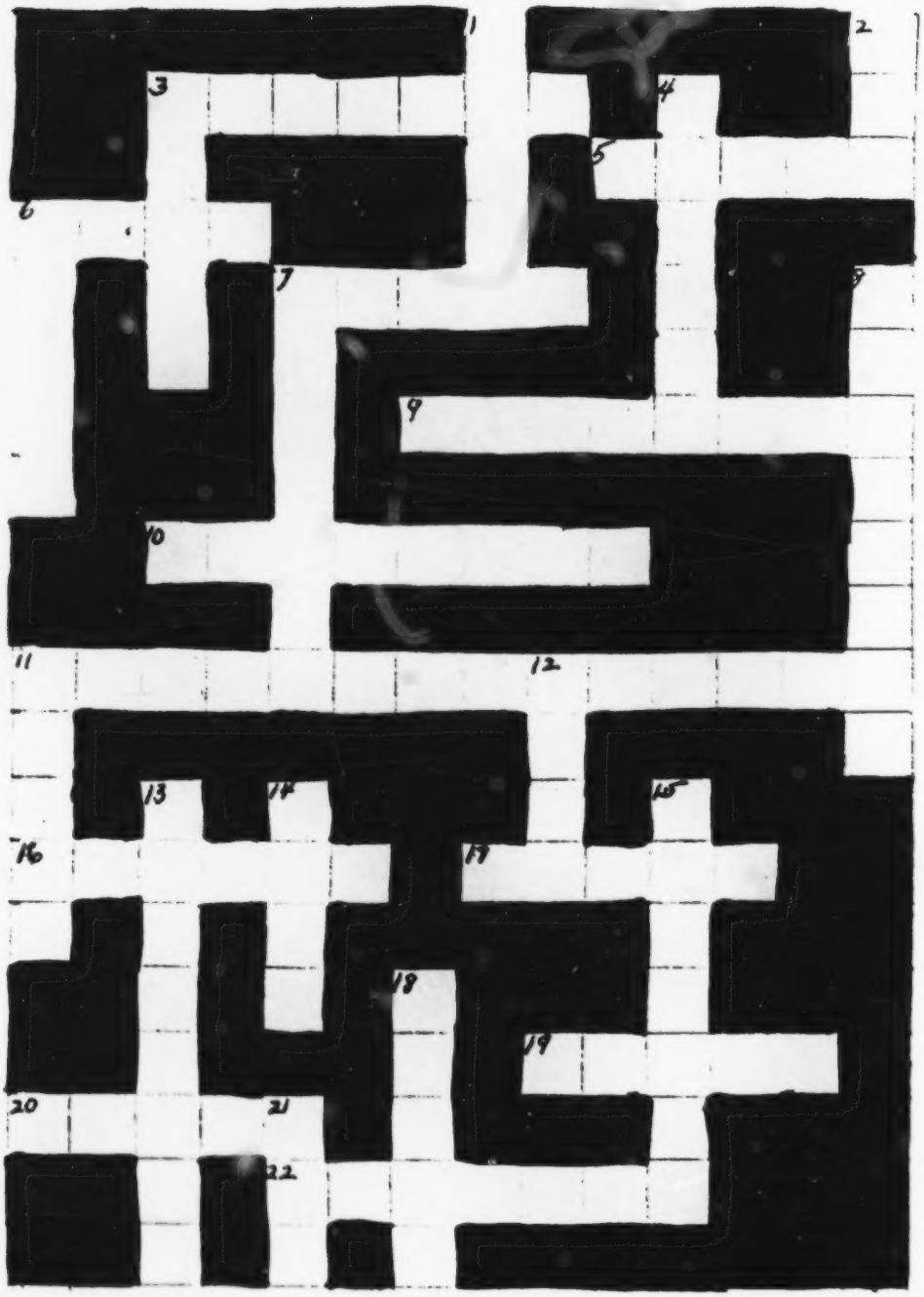
13-Be sure to know the exact _____of the testing site.

14-Some students feel tired and _____when taking a test.

15-Late night_____before the test may cause you to fail.

18-If you have studied, learned to think positively, and know how to relax, you will not need to_____.

21-Do not skip around. Answer questions in order from beginning to_____.


1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22

Tests II

A challenge to the mind,
The final battle in learning a concept,
Many are doomed to fail.

Fear is in their hearts
As the paper is turned in,
Nervous talk and laughter surround the room,
Hidden is the macho uncaring style,
But deep down they fear.

The day after the test,
They are all marked,
Will the mind's torture never stop?
Person next to you has an "F"

Your paper is the last one back,
Another second, you're about to crack,
Then you look down at the grade,
And to your astonishment see "100" - perfect paper.

All confidence in yourself is restored,
And you feel great,
But you always know,
Next time you may not be so lucky.

Ian Silverman

Answers to Crossword Puzzle

Across

3- Content

5- Study

6- Stop

7- Scary

9- Pressure

10- Prepared

11- Transportation

16- Scored

17- Relax

19- Think

20- Noise

22- Nervous

Down

1- Anger

2- Try

3- Clock

4- Stress

6- Start

7- Success

8- Guessing

12- Time

13- Location

14- Weak

15- Parties

18- Worry

21- End